

411 size, from those used in the plains. The plains blacksmith does
326 recognise the Hill Maria's individual taste in such matters, but that
taste is always being modified by the sight, occasional use and
occasional purchase of plains types, particularly if, when a new
weapon is wanted in a hurry, only the latter are immediately
available.

411 The blade of the average Maria knife measures 13 to 15 cm.
from the point to the beginning of the tang. It is about 2.5 cm.
broad where the tang begins, and from there the cutting edge curves
inwards for a quarter or a fifth of its length, thence tapering with
a slight convex curve to the point, which is 2 or 3 cm. to the side
of the axis of the handle. The reverse edge is about 3 mm. thick
in the tang, the thickness gradually diminishing towards the point.
The tang is a continuation of the thick side of the blade, about
8 mm. wide where it leaves the blade and tapering for about 3.5 or
4 cm. to a pointed end. Except where it is continued in this tang,
the blade has a horizontal bottom. The tang is heated and so
burned into the wooden handle; the blacksmith, with this as all
iron tools and weapons, supplies only the iron, and the buyer makes
his own handle. The edge is produced in the first place by hammer-
ing on each side, followed by rubbing down a whet-stone. Being
made of soft iron smelted from local ore, these knives can be given
an extremely sharp point and fine edge. They are not usually
taken back to the smith to be sharpened, but are whetted on a
stone; there is often a flat, black, polished, communal whet-stone
outside the men's dormitory (*gotol*) in a hill village.

411 Besides fitting the tang into a short, cylindrical, wooden handle,
322 about 6.5 to 7.5 cm. long, and in diameter 2 cm. at the base and
somewhat thinner where the tang enters it, the Hill Maria makes
a wooden sheath of two flat pieces of wood trimmed roughly to the
shape of the blade, each of which has on one side a low flange
slightly more than half as thick as the thick edge of the blade.
The two flat pieces are laid on each other, the flanged edges together,
and are joined by whipping of twine, less silk or millimetre-wide
thin thongs of hide at the broad top, over a groove round the centre
of the sheath, and near its point. The sheath is often carved,
favourite designs being rough lozenges in relief on a bar, or a bar
indented, or bands of three parallel lines.

411 This knife the Maria uses for slicing bamboo and all ordinary
cutting purposes; holding the handle loosely in his hand he uses
its full weight for chopping with the concave portion of the blade
pieces of wood up to 3 cm. in diameter, getting a surprisingly
straight cross-section; he usually chops all round the circumference
to a depth of a third of the diameter, then breaks off the portion to

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

83

be severed, trimming the break with the knife held and used in the normal cutting position; he carves patterns in relief with the sharp point, or, holding the knife vertically, rolls the handle between the flat palms of his hand so as to drill holes with the point, trimming the edges of the holes with a burning ember. 411

The Bison-horn Maria uses a similar knife, often much larger, and seldom with a sheath. His *banda* is like a dao, but it is really a glorified and enlarged knife, with a thick end, and sometimes a pronounced bend or angle in the centre of the cutting edge; he uses this for lopping thick saplings or bamboo culms. But the use of the *banda* is not universal, and may be borrowed from Parjas or other tribes to the east. Similar weapons, but socketed on to long shafts of bamboo, and known as *gagra*, are used by the northern Murias and Jhorias, occasionally by Hill Marias, as weapons of offence and defence or billhooks for bamboo and saplings; the ordinary *gagra* has a concavely curved edge and a point, the *chhuri gagra* a convex edge and no point, while the *bhalu gagra* has an edge curving concavely from the top to a bend about half way along its length, and thence concavely to the socket. [17]

The Hill Maria calls his axe *maq'su*, which is the hill gutturalized version of the ordinary Gondi word *maras* used all over the Central Provinces. The Bison-horn Maria uses a totally different word for his axe of this shape, *godel*. The Halbi word is *tangya*. Like the Naga axe, the *maq'su* or *godel* is an iron blade, decidedly suggestive of a long stone celt in form¹; but unlike that axe, the butt of the blade ends in a socket for the haft, not in a tang inserted in a hole in the haft. The cutting edge of the blade among the Hill Marias seldom exceeds 7 cm. width, and 15 cm. is the maximum length of the blade from the cutting edge to the socket, which encloses a haft 4 or 5 cm. in diameter. It has a pronounced 'waist' just before the socket, but this is far more marked on the longer Muria *maras* than on *maq'su* or *godel*. The *godel* is usually rather more massive than the *maq'su*. The blacksmith, when giving an axe its first edge or a new edge to a blunt axe, heats the axe well in his forge, and thoroughly hammers the actual edge. He then heats it again, and hammers it flat on each side till he forms a new edge. He repeats the heating, and grinds down the edge by rubbing each side down a lump of stone. After a further slight heating he dips it in cold water to temper the edge, which is then ready for use. The haft is set at slightly less than a right-angle to the blade, the thick socket being wedged with a thin slip of wood. 412 ●

A type of axe found still sometimes in the hill villages, where it is known as *pala endanna maq'su* (the song-and-dance axe, because 412 326 535

¹ Hutton, *Angami Nagas*, p. 65.

CHARACTERISTICS

412 when the old men of to-day were young it was the decorated axe
535 carried by all Hill Maria men dancers), is similar to the *pharsi*
battle-axe of the plains tribes. The blade is crescent-shaped, the
concave being the cutting edge, and the convex outer edge being
socketed in the centre to receive the haft, which fits in the same
vertical plane as the cutting edge. I have seen one of these axes
measuring 41 cm. between the horns of the crescent.

411 The Hill Marias use small throwing spears made in one piece
of iron, of the same type as the much larger solid spears used by
the Murias of Amabera and north Kondagaon. They have leaf-
shaped but very long blades, shafts with a knob counterpoise and,
below the knob, spiked butts about a foot long. They are not
nowadays very skilled throwers, there being scarcely any game in
the hills. The thrower stands at a right incline to his target, and,
holding the spear by the point of balance, uses much the same action
as the javelin thrower of modern athletics.

411 The Bison-horn Maria uses a long and powerful stabbing spear
224 for killing the big game, including tiger and panther, that his
beaters drive into his nets. This is about 8½ to 9 feet (2.6 to 2.8
metres) long, and consists of an iron head socketed on to a long
bamboo shaft. The head consists of a blade about 30 cm. long and
7 cm. wide at the greatest width just above the shank, whence the
wings taper with a slight convexity to the point; a shank nearly
as long, slightly thinner where it leaves the blade than where it
ends in the socket; and a socket about 22 cm. long, generally with
one or more iron or brass rings which are forced down over the
socket from the shank when the shaft has been inserted, to tighten
the grip of the socket on the shaft. The socket below these rings
often forms a convenient grip for the right hand, when the huntsman
leans on his upright spear with his right upper arm extended
horizontally from his elbow, and the elbow bent for the hand to
grip the spear above the plane of the crown of the head. When the
quarry is netted, the spear has its point lowered to the front pointing
slightly downwards, the left arm is bent for the hand to grasp the
spear well below the socket, while the right hand grasps it about
a foot from the butt-end of the shaft, and the spearman sprints
forward and stabs the quarry with a smart two-handed downward
thrust.

411 The last weapons to be described are bows and arrows. The
Hill Marias call the bow *vilu*, and the Bison-horn Marias *vile*;
the word, strictly speaking, means the stave only, the cord being
ha'undi in the former and *panti* in the latter language. The stave
is nearly always of bamboo, but the Bison-horn Marias, who
generally use more powerful weapons than the hill men, sometimes

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

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the embankment of a field, both can join in spreading brushwood over a clearing.

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A motiari can put her hand to a plough and help her chchik in the long labour of the furrow. She can go with her chchik to the forest for wood

and she can help him carry it, but she must not use an axe, though she may break bits of wood with her hands or feet. She may not kill anything, yet she can join the beat for small game and she may fix a trap in the river and bale water out so that the boys can catch the fish. But she must not use a bow and arrow, or a knife, or thrust the plunge-traps into the water.



FIG. 14. *Baras or latti* used for cutting up meat and planing wood
Length of upright 9"

A motiari, once she is mature, must not sleep on a machan to watch the fields. She must never go with a boy to sleep there—if she does a tiger will shake it and perhaps kill them both. In some villages, she may cow-dung the thrashing-floor, provided it is of her own clan, but she cannot thrash with her feet, or

winnow the grain from a fan though she may do it with her hands. She must not sow seeds of rice or millet, though she does sometimes sow beans and vegetables.

The motiari gather mahua flowers with the boys; they collect myrabolams, and extract oil. Very important, they take food to the boys while they are working in the fields. This is a constant motive of romance in folk-tales.

The motiari may attend a funeral and most of the festivals. At the New Eating ceremonies they prepare the plates and cups for the feast, and are eager spectators of the ceremonies. They dance at most festivals with the boys. But I know of no Muria women Siraha-mediums or Gunia-diviners, though these are not unknown in Chhattisgarh. I am told, however, that there is a female Siraha of Pendrawandin in Gudabera, and there is a tradition that in former times it was the women who sacrificed to the gods. 'In those days, they used to cut the tail instead of the head and the bird or animal instead of dying would escape. Men soon got annoyed at this and said, "You women do not know how to do it; from now we will sacrifice". Men then began to cut off the heads of the birds and animals and the sacrifices were complete. This is why women do not eat the head of any bird or animal offered to the gods. They said to their husbands, "Now the head is yours, ours is the tail".'

There are not many absolute taboos. A man must not husk grain or grind it. He must not wash women's clothes or wear them—except at night. Girls must not wear boys' turbans and clothes except on ceremonial occasions.

On the whole, Muria economy provides many opportunities for boys and girls to work together in the open air. This is one reason why their relations remain so fresh and healthy.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947

A W32 Gond A W32

Muria

Ordon AW39



Uraon dhangri

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Plate LXVII

Motiari of Kongera grinding



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THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

māma and so on. As they give the salute they stretch out their hands, sometimes both hands, lower and then raise them in a pretty gesture. Often

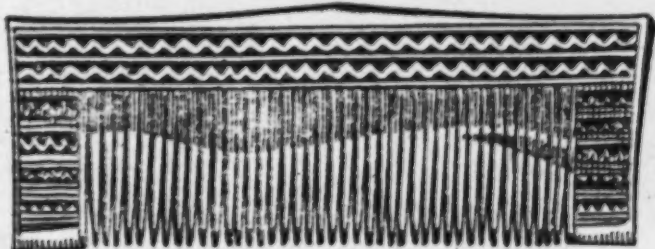


FIG. 67. Carved wooden comb from Toinar
Length 6"

they only use one hand, laying it on head or shoulder; in the east of Kondagaon they put both hands on the head.

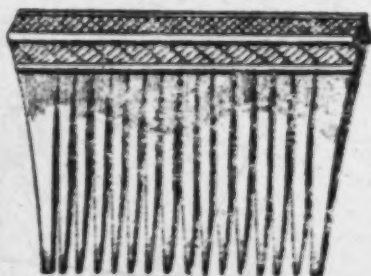


FIG. 68. A comb from the Narayanpur Tahsil
Width 2½"

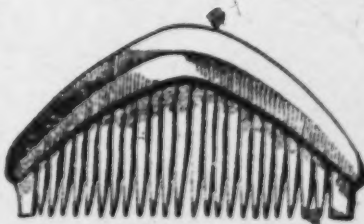


FIG. 69. A comb from Phulpar
Width 3½"

When the boys have finished, the *motiari* go round in the same way, with the same gestures and salutes, generally speaking in high, almost artificial

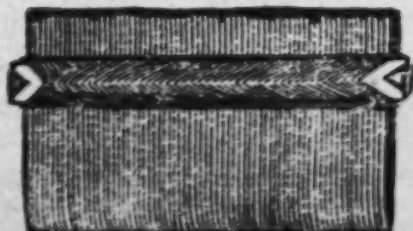


FIG. 70. A bamboo comb, of a type sometimes
made by Muria for sale in the bazaars
Width 2½"

voices. In Phulpar the girls did not say *Johar*, but repeated the *ghotul* title twice, thus—'Gaita, Gaita' or 'Kotwar, Kotwar'. A girl should not salute a boy to whom she is betrothed or her *Lambhada*, and she must be very careful about using the proper terms of relationship—for by this means she is reminded of the tribal laws of avoidance. In some *ghotul* this ceremony is performed twice, once when the company first assembles and

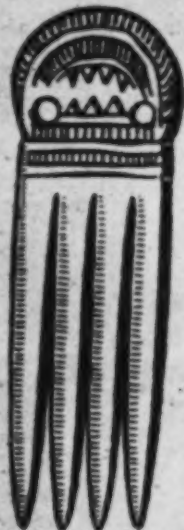


FIG. 74. Comb of a type often used in the Abujmar foothills.
Length 3½"

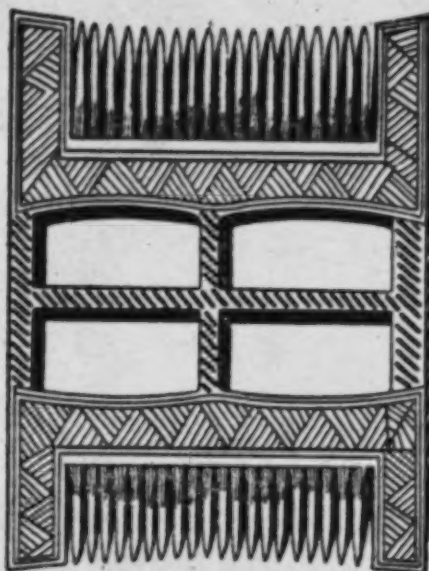
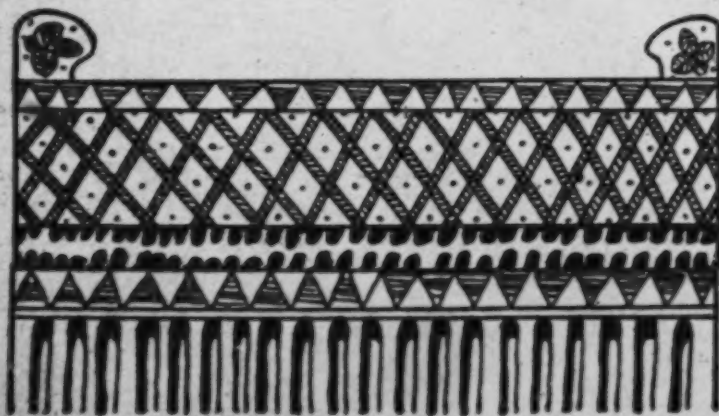


FIG. 75. Double comb from Bhanpuri
Height 4½"



From Paul Schuchman's article "The Decorative Art of the Aborigines of the Malay Peninsula" in *JRAS* (1909), p. 738

FIG. 76. Malayan comb
(See p. 289e)

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AN EVENING IN THE GHOTUL

each other's arms on the sleeping-mat. They often have to lie very close together; sometimes two boys have one girl between them; many of the couples actually touch each other. In the big ghotul real lovers and those who intend to have sexual intercourse may go and sleep in the smaller huts in the compound.

In ghotul where the motiar always sleep in the ghotul, bedtime is a simple matter of routine. In places where they only stay on sometimes, they go singing to their own house or verandah. When they are not sure what to do, they stay on till the Sirdar says, 'Well, girls, are you going to sleep here or are you going home?' The Belosa answers, 'It's very late, I think we'd better stay here' or 'There's a tiger about, it's not safe to go'. The Sirdar says, 'Then go to your mats at once and don't keep us awake any longer'.

In Chandabera, the boys told me that the girls often said, 'Let's go home tonight' and ran away. But if a boy was anxious to sleep with his girl, he would ask the Kotwar to keep them and he always did.



FIG. 77. Tobacco box in the shape of a wheel
Width 4 1/2"



FIG. 78. Comb with carved leopard
Width 5"



FIG. 79. The horned-gate or tortoise box
Height 4"

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FIG. 80. Bird-comb from Chandabera
Height 4½"

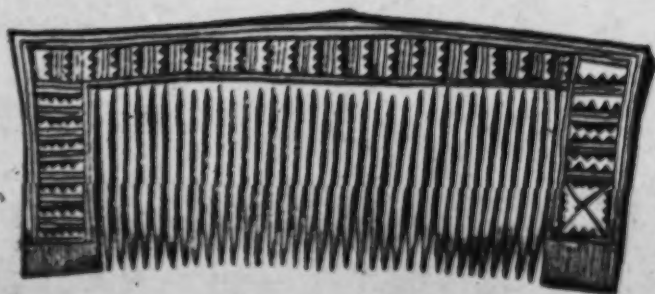


FIG. 81. Comb from Bhorpal
Length 3½"

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

302 The pubic hairs, reference to which can be made the most inflammatory of insults, are entirely removed by girls. They are supposed to smear the hairs with wood-ash and pull them out. 'If a woman uses a razor for this', we were told at Phanda, 'she will become very heavy after death, and the men who carry out her body will laugh and say, "She's one of those who used a razor"'.¹

III. COMBS

Belle marrâle pungâr puy ânda

On a dry tree blossoms a flower—A comb

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301 In the intimate life of chelik and motiari the comb plays a most important part. It is used every night by the motiari when they tidy the hair of the boys. It is used to titillate the skin of back and arms. In many places it is one of the most popular forms of personal adornment. Both boys and girls wear it but it is essentially a girl's possession and a girl's decoration. In Binjhi I remember seeing a row of girls walking in file; each of them had ten or fifteen combs arranged in lines on the left side of the head. But there is no rule about this. Sometimes the combs are in the back hair, sometimes on both sides. Boys wear one or two combs in the turban, or stuck in the back hair.

412 Different types of comb are illustrated in Figs. 67-70, 74-5, and 80-1. I believe the patterns are simply for decorative purposes and have no magical significance. Thurston has an interesting passage, which unfortunately he does not illustrate, about the strikingly similar designs of the combs of the Negritos of Malacca and the Kadir of the Anaimalai Hills.² Preuss had worked out a theory that the patterns were not geometrical, but consisted of a series of hieroglyphics.³ Thurston, however, believed that the Kadir comb decorations were only conventional. The bamboo combs worn by Semang women are said to be talismans against disease,⁴ but neither Kadir nor Muria combs seem to have this meaning. The Muria combs are often carved with phallic symbols—but their aim is not magical, but the very practical one of arousing sexual interest.⁵

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301 For a girl to possess a large number of combs does not necessarily mean that she is specially popular; more probably it implies that she has a very

¹ With this may be compared a Gond proverbial saying recorded in Mandla. 'The carriers lifted up the pubic hairs to make the corpse lighter, but found it made no difference.'

² Thurston, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 271.

³ E. T. Preuss, 'Die Zauberbilder Schriften der Negrito in Malaya' in *Globus*, 1899. Schebesta, however, considers that this, like the flower-pattern theory of Vaughan Stevens, is 'entirely baseless'. P. Schebesta, 'The Decorative Art of the Aborigines of the Malay Peninsula', *JRAS* (1929), p. 749. (See Fig. 76)

⁴ W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula* (London, 1906), Vol. I, pp. 396ff. For the magical significance of the comb, see also J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales* (London, 1890), Vol. I, p. lxxi; L. Garnett, *Great Folk Poetry* (London, 1896), Vol. II, p. 437. The occurrence of the comb on early Celtic monuments points to the value set on it. See Macculloch, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

⁵ In several tribes, the gift of a comb is an essential part of the marriage ceremony. This is so among the Medavaz.—Thurston, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 93. The Kadir bridegroom should always make a comb and present it to his future wife just before marriage or at the end of the ceremony.—*ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 28. At a Kuki marriage, the priest presents husband and wife with small combs. 'Combs, perhaps these particular combs, are very sacred things. It is very unlucky to lose them, and man and wife only may use the same comb. When a man dies, his comb is buried with him, and his near relations break their combs and must roam with dishevelled hair for a few days before they renew them.'—Dalton, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

[30]

FIG. 87. Head-band of sago palm fibre from
Malakot (see p. 383)
Length 23"FIG. 88. Neck-band of date palm fibre from
Bayanar (see p. 383)
Length 16"

devoted lover. Every comb, however, is a gift. When a girl wants a new one she brings two annas' worth of silver metal from the bazaar and that

FIG. 89. Cowrie head-band from Ulara. The cowries are attached to a
cord made of carefully woven sago palm fibre
(See p. 386)

DETAIL

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

night goes to comb the hair of the boy from whom she desires a present. She does his hair with special care and whispers in his ear, 'Look, boy, I have brought some silver, make me a nice comb'. The boy says, 'I don't know how to'. The girl says, 'But of course you know'. Then the boy says, 'Well, what will you give me? Will you....?' The girl says, 'Never', meaning 'Yes', and the boy makes the comb.

In well-disciplined ghotul a boy cannot give a comb to a motiari without the permission of the Kotwar; sometimes it has actually to pass through the Kotwar's hands. For such a gift seems to be regarded as a very definite and important step in the love relations between a boy and girl, and it is considered necessary by the ghotul authorities to keep a check on such intimacies in case there is any scandal or trouble. To this witness some lines in a Paskna Pata from Bandopal:

Where did you get a comb like that?

You got it from the embrace of a chelik.

One comb for once, two combs for twice.

If a comb is lost or broken, the chelik must make a new one. Otherwise his motiari says, 'How can I comb his hair?' If the Kotwar hears about it, he orders the boy to make one, and he does so at once.

Most combs are made of mahua or karraha wood. Implements used in their manufacture are a small saw, 2" broad and 6" long, rather like a fret-saw; a *hadri* knife; a *hujji* chisel and a *tatti* adze.

The Kotwar of the Phunder ghotul made a comb for me. He took a piece of mahua wood 2" long and 3" broad, supported one end on a bit of wood and gradually planed down one end, first with the adze and then with his knife. He stood it on end and trimmed the top; then with the saw cut a number of slits 1" deep, measuring them with a twig to ensure that they were even. He cut them again and again to enlarge the slits, leaving on either side of the wood a space uncut.

Now another boy came and held the wood firmly, and the Kotwar cut off 1½" from the top with his saw, first cutting half through on one side, then turning the wood over and doing it from the other. Finally he broke the piece off and trimmed it with his knife. So far the process had taken half an hour, but the small piece of wood had taken shape as a comb. The boy now spent fifteen minutes shaping the sides, then with his chisel he enlarged the slits again and carefully cleaned the apertures between the spikes. After this, he held the comb in the hollow of his left hand and grasping the chisel firmly in the right and pressing it down hard began to decorate the comb with various patterns. By the time he had finished, he had spent two-and-a-half hours on the work, the greater part of the time being spent on the decoration.

[314] The next morning the Kotwar went to a wild fig tree to extract its sticky, milky gum. He struck a branch with the blunt end of his axe and caught some drops of gum in a leaf-cup. He brought this back and sat down by a fire. He spread the gum on either side of the comb with a bit of straw, warmed it on the fire, applied more gum, laid the silver paper over it and rubbed it in hard with the handle of his chisel till the pattern showed. He repeated the process on the opposite side toasting the comb before the fire by sticking it on the end of his chisel. Finally he brought out the pattern clearly by pressing in the silver paper with his own finger-nails, and washed it with a straw dipped in water.

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

In some villages of the Bomra Pargana, if a comb falls down, it must be left where it is for a whole day. No one else may pick it up, and the owner should say nothing to anybody.

FIG. 90. Wooden hair-pins
from the Jhorla area

Longest pin 4½"
(See p. 386)



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[301]

In most places, there is a rule that when a motiari marries she should remove her combs within a certain time. Naturally if she has a dozen or more in her hair, the presents of a ghotul lover, it is only proper for her to return them to him when she marries someone else. But suppose it was her own husband who gave them to her, or another girl? Then she continues to wear them. It is not safe to say that a girl with combs is a motiari, one without combs a wife. I have seen women with three children wearing them. But usually the smart silvered ones are removed within a year of marriage.¹

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IV. CRABSTICKS

The Muria are, on the whole, a clean and tidy people. The chelik and motiari especially are devoted to their toilet, wash their clothes frequently,

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¹ The Lakher and Lushai share the Muria objection to other people using their combs. 'They fear that if a man who is subject to headaches or who has a vampire soul uses another's comb, the owner may suffer in the same way.—Parry, op. cit., p. 34.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

GHOTUL DISCIPLINE

I

*"We obey our ghotul laws more faithfully than the laws of Government;
for we ourselves made the ghotul laws, and so we love them."*

—Common Muria saying

THE life of the chelik and motiari is strictly regulated, and when a leader is appointed one of the powers with which he is entrusted is that of judging and punishing offenders against the ghotul code. It is surprising how important a place these punishments hold in the minds of the



FIG. 97. Comb from Palari. The two horns
are of bees-wax
Width 2½"

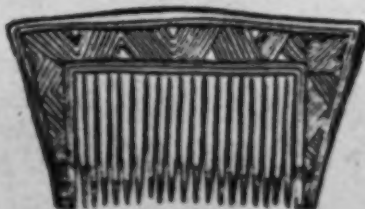


FIG. 98. Comb from Astagah
Width 5"



FIG. 99. The Pado-gala
Actual size

GHOTUL DISCIPLINE

children. When they are initiated, the little boys are told—'You must come every day, or you'll be punished'. The girls are likewise told—'You must

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[276]

FIG. 100. Tobacco pounder
Length 12"

come every day, or you'll be punished. You must massage the chelik, or you'll be punished.' And when a girl leaves the ghotul at marriage, her



FIG. 101. The Dark-wood gait
Height 4"



FIG. 102. A Jhoris comb from Markabera
Width 3 1/2"

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[276]

most tender memories, as revealed in the farewell songs, seem to be connected with punishments. 'Dadhā gāi hā lāi mīkai—The cow that gives milk:

GHOTUL EXPEDITIONS

this exchange goes so far as to include the sleeping arrangements, but I have no real information about this. Food is provided by the hosts. If the Irpu Pandum, the festival of the eating of the new mahua flowers, has not been celebrated, there is a strict taboo on the drinking of mahua spirit. If this taboo is broken the supply of flowers will fail. In Jungani there was a rule that the dance must not be performed at all until the flowers were gathered in. Here it was supposed that the noise of the stick-dance has a bad effect on the crop.

At the end of the expedition the boys and girls return to their own village and dance before the Gaita's house round and round the semur tree. The Gaita offers liquor to it, then pulls it up and throws it away. The ring is given to the leader of the dance. Finally the boys tie their sticks to a rope across a path near the village boundary in the usual way.

If there is a bazaar in the neighbourhood the boys visit it and dance in its four corners.

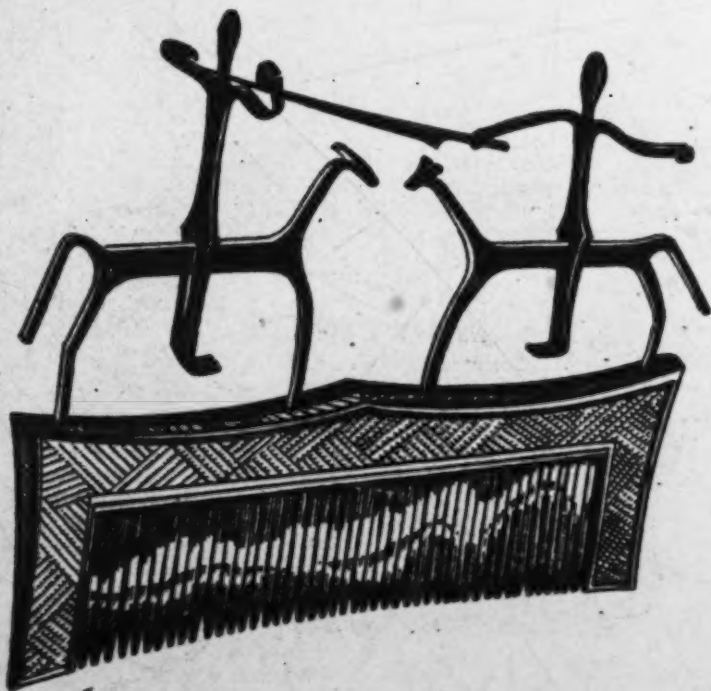


FIG. 121. Comb with chelik and motiari on horseback

The sticks used in this dance are called either *dawddy* or *hili* and are usually made of surtali wood. Before the Gaita pulls up the semur tree the boys hang their sticks upon it.

41 in this book, but the Maria have a fine spear used for stabbing. Bows and arrows are not unlike those in use elsewhere. The arrows are either pointed or clubbed. Pellet bows are used for killing birds, as is the *engram*, the many-pointed wooden arrow which is illustrated here. The pointed iron arrow is that employed in most of the murders by shooting or stabbing. But the *engram* was used in one or two cases.

- 412 Implements of domestic use include the heavy rice-husker which is so constantly in the hands of the women. With this Oyami Masa in a fit of rage battered his cousin to death at Jabeli.¹ The Bison-horn Maria hoe (*korki*) is similar to that common in the plains, and a man once used it to kill his mother in a fit of drunkenness.²

283 The Maria have no subsidiary industries worth the name.

286 Spinning and weaving is taboo to them, though they are allowed to spin rope from hemp and grass. They make

285 baskets of leaves and bamboo, but mostly for their own domestic use. They are expert at making mats, which they either weave with grass and reeds on a frame or plait with bamboo slats. The Maria do their own ironwork and do it

326 well, for there is a plentiful supply of excellent ore. Those
565 Maria who take to smelting and blacksmithery are regarded as inferior by the others who generally do not inter-marry or eat with them. This rule is not, however, absolute and in other ways the Maria blacksmiths live as members of the tribe, join their dances and festivals and share the common life. For statistical purposes I have included the Maria blacksmiths among the other Maria in this book.

III

- 771 The religion of the Maria centres round the Earth, the State and the Clan. The Earth is the ultimate source of life and is personified in the Village Mother. The State is represented by Danteshwari, the tutelary goddess of the royal family: she is now sometimes identified with the Earth Mother or the Village Mother, but she often has a shrine or at least an image of her own, and her cult is rapidly increasing in popularity.

771 Developing out of the cult of the earth is the worship of
776 the clan-god. The traditional theory is that every clan is
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¹ Case No 62.

² Case No 72.

CRIME IN FAMILY LIFE

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decided to go to his father's house to get his children by ^{674x}
his former wife. The girl insisted on going with him. As ⁵⁷⁸

they were approaching Telam they had ⁶⁰⁷
the misfortune to meet Kosa coming along
the same path. Apparently some people
returning from a bazaar had told him that
Boti had returned, and he had set out to
seek vengeance armed with a gagra.
When the boy saw his elder brother, he
said, 'My fate is good, for it has sent
you to me, since you have run away with
my wife'. And so saying he struck Boti
across the face. At that Boti seized his
brother by his arms, and there was a
struggle in the course of which Kosa
was killed.



Gagra knife
(Length 18")

When Boti returned from jail, he had ^[42]
to make special offerings in addition to
undergoing the usual ceremony of puri-
fication. Since he had kept his younger
brother's wife, he had to sacrifice to the
Departed of his house, and to his clan-
god. If he had not done this, his
body would have swollen and he would
have died. As it was, he was impotent
for a whole year after he was released
from jail.

V

It is perhaps surprising that there are not more murders ^{674x}
as a result of the liberties allowed a youth with his elder ⁶⁰⁷
brother's wife. Boti stood in this pleasant relation to Mase
and as a result they poisoned Mase's husband in order that
they could be regularly married. The murder of Tati Hirne
was due to her rejection of her dead husband's younger
brother when he came to claim her.

It is possible that the remarkable forbearance shown by
Ujji Poda towards Kopa, his younger cousin-brother, who
was in love with his wife, Ragho, was due to his realization
that Kopa was not breaking any tribal or social conventions:

¹⁵² 67⁴ congress. Hebka Masa killed his wife Pakli in consequence of a long dispute, but immediately before the tragedy she refused to lie with him. Barse Chappe, a polygamous invalid, was first refused by both his wives and later by his senior wife because he desired to perform the act in a semi-public place. Marvi Deva saw his wife with a man and when, probably to test her, he asked her to give herself to him and she refused, he killed his baby daughter and tried to kill her. Kosa, an almost imbecile paralytic, asked his wife to have intercourse with him; she abused him and he stabbed her to death. Doga, rejected sexually by his elder brother's widow, was so affronted that he killed her. Mundra, who so brutally treated his wife Pande, asked her to have sexual congress with him and was refused only an hour before he met his death at her hands.



Decorated
banda knife
(Length 3')

Such a refusal may also drive a man to suicide. Marvi Joga, the Waddai of Mathadi, was always quarrelling with his wife and threatening to remarry. One day at the funeral ceremony of his brother's son, he drank a lot of surem, and when he came home he tried to have intercourse with his wife. But she refused saying, 'You are always talking about another wife. Why don't you go and get one?' and she went away to sleep in the Room of the Departed. Joga, intoxicated and desperate at his wife's refusal, hanged himself.

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442
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to abuse the old man, calling him *mailotia* and thief. Masa did not mind the reflection on his relations with his mother who had been dead for many years. But he greatly objected to being called a thief, for this came nearer home and he replied hotly that it was Oyami Masa who was the real thief, since he had stolen seven cattle from a village in Sukma Zamindari. The boys were very angry at this—possibly the accusation was true and therefore dangerous—and went off threatening that they would tell Oyami Masa and take their revenge. Already drunk, the boys went to Oyami Masa's house and there the relatives gathered together and plotted to give Masa a good beating; they may even have decided to get rid of him altogether. At about 10 o'clock that night the six men armed with sticks came to Masa's house. Oyami Masa led the way in and began to beat his cousin. The stick he had was a rotten one and broke immediately. But as bad luck would have it, his eye fell on a heavy rice-pestle, and he picked this up and delivered several heavy blows which fractured Masa's skull in two places and would alone have been sufficient to kill him. Masa's son and brother tried to save him. But the other men knocked them down, and then belaboured Masa with their sticks until they were certain he was dead. When examined the body was a mass of injuries—there were nine fractures of the ribs, the left ear was torn and the spleen badly ruptured; there were bruises everywhere. When their work was done, the men departed doing the *sui* whistle which, indeed, one witness declared Oyami Masa whistled as he led the attack on his cousin.

Perhaps the most notable thing about this incident was the way Oyami Masa tried to save his fellow-conspirators by taking all the blame upon himself. He said that, as he was going for the night worship in connection with the festival, Masa shouted at him and accused him of instigating some Mahara



Rice-pestle
(Length 4')